

HAWAII PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY

AMP 37- HILO

RESIDENT COMMUNITY MEETING

Lanakila Homes I, Lanakila Homes II, Lanakila Homes IV, Hale Aloha O Puna (Elderly), Hale Olaloa (Elderly), Kauhale O'Hanakahi, Pahala (Elderly), Pomaikai Homes (Elderly), Punahale Homes, and Lokahi- (State)

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February 24, 2009 @ 6:00 pm at Pomaikai Elderly Community Center

INTRODUCTIONS- Clarissa Hosino, HPHA Board of Directors Resident Member, facilitator for the community meeting; Chad Taniguchi, Executive Director; Stephanie Fo, Property Management Chief; Tammy Passmore, Manager; Helen Hough, Deputy Manager, and Dennis McCarthy Maintenance Supervisor.

Went over the Ground Rules for the meeting.

Recognition of the New Punahale Association, Mr. Mark Gomes is President and staff. Active Resident Association very important for communications between Association, Residents, Management and Police. Goal is to have an active association in every housing project.

Thank you Council Member Donald Ikeda for coming out.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

- (1) Councilmember Donald Ikeda suggested to create more parking and/or to prevent excessive speed on the road: add speed bumps in the parking; or, make it a one way street.
- (2) Mr. Mitch Roth – Deputy Prosecutor - Eviction Evidence – Act 34

Response: Mr. Roth has been working with Stephanie and other community prosecutors from Honolulu on problems with housing and dealing with evictions. Legislature is reviewing policies to come back with more clarity so people know what to expect. Public Housing is changing some rules also.

Question: Are you prosecuting anyone yet?

Response: No cases has been prosecuted in State Court, as of yet. In addition to prosecuting in State Court under Civil Law, the Public Housing has right to initiate evictions, fines etc.

Mr. Roth says he has dealt with Public housing and one argument that comes up is, where are these people going to go? Mr. Roth responds Public Housing is not a place for criminals to go. It is a place for good people, good housing.

Mr. Roth says that is the responsibility of the resident community to make sure they contact the police when they see something is not right or suspicious. A community watch program is good. He said that if someone who was volunteering with the community watch program was threatened he would personally take that case and make sure that bail was set high.

If you call the police you have the option to remain anonymous. You can also call the non emergency line. Mr. Roth says it is important to keep calling the police, because if the police keep coming to the same place it will make the person uncomfortable and less likely to continue there. Mr. Roth gave out his direct phone number 934-3508.

- (3) Hanakahi – Tenant at Hanakahi talks about a nude streaker. He does not live there, but his brother and sister-in-law resides at this project. This nudist has been running around kids and takes off his pants in front of them. Tenant went to the unit to tell him to put his pants back on. Police had been contacted and they arrested him. He was locked up for 14 hours to be then be released and than he was back to his brothers house.

Response: Mr. Roth informs tenant that police can prosecute for trespassing and can be restricted from that area. Mr. Roth said he will give her his card after the meeting and she can call him directly.

- (4) Punahale – Tenant from Punahale shared about drug activity behind her unit in the Lokahi Park. Concern is people are drug dealing and drive fast to get out of there. Tenant would like to see speed bumps and anything else that can help.

Response: Mr. Roth asked if they had a community watch program in place. That would be a start. He says to have them set up a meeting with the police. He said for the residents to track license plates, names of cars. Call Tammy let her know what is going on. She can write a violation notice to the person if she has some evidence.

Tenant requested that rules of Public Housing Procedure be clearly explained and enforced if there was proof of someone selling drugs or speeding.

Tammy explained process. There needs to be as much evidence as possible before it goes before the eviction board. Witnesses are helpful.

Question: From time call made or 3 calls made what is the expectation that we'll see results? Does investigation start right away?

Response: It could be a year before it goes to eviction because of the number of items that need to be presented at the hearing.

Mr. Roth says that if they were to find drugs it is taken to a lab to get tested. Even if it is a criminal case it can take up to a year. It is almost like a game of tag. One good thing is that most of these houses are close to the police station. If you have a community watch group and I set up an officer with that group, I could possibly move things through the process a lot faster.

Question: Somebody calls police. There are several witnesses, should they all call the police.

Response: Mr. Roth says yes because there is strength in numbers. Stephanie says it is better because the more who witness and put in a complaint will help the hearing process.

- (5) Is it okay to take Pictures?

Response: Mr. Roth responds yes if it is out in public. He shares that the department the County Prosecuting Attorney Office has invested about \$500,000 on cameras for several locations on the Big Island.

- (6) Training – It was asked if it is possible to get some training that might be helpful.

Response: Mr. Roth responds that they offer 2 day problem solving training. There will be a training in Honolulu on March 19th and 20th. Says can do one in this area. One has already been completed for Councilwoman Ford and Councilman Pilago. It is a 2 day training which includes Police Officers and other agencies. Team of 10 is good and 6-8 people who work with housing.

- (7) PHA PLAN – George Demello will be holding meetings with the associations regarding the PHA Plan. It is a 5 year plan. Its goal is to help improve situation is housing. Group came up with 19 issues. There are 10 components that they feel are the most important. They will not be talked about tonight but would like to set time to have it talked about. They will give their recommendations of what they support at the Public Hearing.

In the next rent bill there will be a Notice of Public Hearing for the PHA Plan included.

(8) Status Update

Punahele - Tree Trimming. Punahele – Association cut down trees, the flowers when they fall create a slipping hazard.

Lanakila - Filling of dirt where settled in common areas – still need to finish filling up to sidewalk

Roaches, mice and insects quotes for Punahele, Hanakahi and Lanakila – Quotes came back at Initial Pest fee is \$22,395 and yearly \$31,520 and Rodents initial fee \$4,591 and yearly \$6,400. The three companies quotes received from include: Hilo Termite, Will Kill and Bowman. The lowest bid came from Will Kill. Tammy lets residents know that budget will not permit this type of treatment. The best management can do is to help individual residents with roach hotels, sticky mice traps.

Work Orders – charges about work orders has been fixed. Talked with each tenant that had concern, charges and not getting work orders done, they are satisfied.

Handicap stall for tenant in Hanakahi is now assigned.

(9) Pomaikai – when are roofs going to be fixed? Gutters are leaking.

Response: Tammy says project has been looked at and is waiting funding approval. Honolulu will look into project sources and funding and get back to Tammy.

(10) Hanakahi Gutters – back porches are rotting because the gutter need cleaning and trees are overhanging. There is no need to repair porches until gutters are cleaned out because it will just rot again. Tammy says that management is waiting to hear back about funding to make repairs, over hang, gutters and porches. Tenant says before getting funds to fix the gutters need to get plants taken out. If they had not waited this long would not have problems with the back porches.

Question: What is maintenance expectations?

Response: Work with Public Housing Authority. Union Rules does not allow maintenance crew to go up two stories to clean out the gutters. They can do the ground level, but are not allowed to go to the second level.

Question: For Chad, can someone work with the union?

Response: Chad says would like to introduce Dennis McCarthy in charge of maintenance staff. Says can look at Union Rules, talk to union to see if can get those taken care of. No chance of person falling. Tenant says pressure wash might be a good option. Would it help to have more volunteers?. Yes, Office phone number given out. 933-0474.

(11) Lanakila – Kids in park. Trees are all dried up where they were cutting trees. Dead leaves all dried up.

(12) Punahele – Now that there is a new association, how to decommission unit for services. Management suggests that they put everything in writing reason why it is needed, what activities, etc. and submit to Tammy who will then send it to HUD for approval.

(13) Lanakila – Alicia Harris, why is HI-PAL still here if they are not doing anything?

George DeMello responds: Hi-PAL has been in Lanakila for 4 years and has ran lots of programs out of the center. They are waiting for the electric to be re-installed. Currently there are new poles, new meter, but no electric allowed to the center until the engineers give the ok. They are waiting for the new project to get started.

- (14) Hanakahi – Lychee Tree encroaching onto property and leaning on building. Request that the trees get cut back. Not to let it go. Stephanie says ok to cut our side. Contact owner let them know that we need to cut back the tree.
- (15) Speed bumps and one ways. Would like to get a sense of the group. Have a petition going around Lanakila. Speed bumps slow people down, helpful. Don't think one-ways are very useful. Holomalia is a one-way and there are people going the wrong way, even the police. If there was a way to monitor the one-way, than maybe.
- (16) Lanakila – Tenant shares about her concerns about the parking in Lanakila. Says that she lives on Kupukupu St. and sees people trying to reserve parking, by putting garbage cans in the stall. She had to park several units away and it happened that that night she had rush her child to E.R. She had to carry her child to her car. She also shared that at the top of Hema St. and Popolo if cars could park at an angle it would be helpful. She has had two incidents where she almost had a car accident because the cars that are parked straight she can't see cars coming, but if they park at an angle it could help relieve the blind spot. Also shared that one time she came home parked in a stall near her unit and another tenant parked behind her blocking her in. Said she had to go knock on the door at 7am to let the person know needs to move car, that person was very upset.

George DeMello responds: The parking problems started in 1962 when the construction was done. And a lot of it has to do with the issue of the road being a county road.

Question: How do we address people who reserve parking with garbage cans?

Response: Tammy shares that management and maintenance has gone around collecting things or removing objects that are in the stalls and reminding residents DO NOT PARK HERE.

Question: Is there a way to have County turn road back over to State?

Response: George made it possible already, but re-painting and expenses State cannot afford it.

Question: Outside people can park also?

Response: Yes. If we could do something about residents having a sticker it could help identify authorized residents. If State could be responsible for parking and keep the roads under County than parking stickers could be issued.

Suggestion: If numbers were written in the stalls people would be not apt to parking there because there is a number there, whether the numbers signify anything or not.

Chad responds: If the stalls could be turned over to State, I think I can support that, because parking stalls would have to be fixed less often than roads.

Question: How did Lokahi Place get numbers on their stalls?

Response: We were lucky to have stalls for each unit. Tammy says it is because State owns that project.

Question: So how many stickers is one unit going to get?

Response: Every housing unit is allowed one stall. Currently, there are sufficient stalls at the project.

Question: What's going to say that neighbors don't tell their guest to go ahead and park there?

Response: If stickers are in place than those without stickers would be in violation. A tenant brought up that some people have 3 cars in one unit. If the tenant is allowed one sticker than those without stickers would get a violation.

Question: A tenant who has been living in Lanakila for 38 years says this is the worst it has ever been. Believe that there is not enough parking because they built a new unit, which took away stalls.

Response: The best thing to do is to have stickers to allow resident to park in the area. If sticker is not on car, then car gets towed.

Question: A tenant mentioned why allow parking on one side of the road or for the road used to be one way.

Response: Without some changes and residents parking all over the road, then emergency vehicles could not get up the road when cars parked on the road. Road is too narrow.

- (17) Put parking where grassy area is. One suggestion is to check out new technology called (grasscrete). You dig out holes and lay blocks down.

Response: One problem before was that the gas lines are under grass. But now they have located the gas lines. This could be done and it would help increase the parking.

- (18) It was addressed with engineers regarding fence on Popolo St. Need to cut it in half for visibility. Also kids play on there, safety issue.

- (19) One tenant brought up the storage units. Asks if they could look at one unit 6X8. Says it blends into unit nicely and cost less than \$200.00. It was asked if she brought a picture. No picture brought.

Management shared that the problem is making sure that it blends well, but also not to have too big in order not to create rodent infestation problems.

Tenant says that it would be easier for her to pay less than \$200.00 from Home Depot than to pay over \$500.00 with housings offer of the guidelines.

One tenant brought up that the storage is important so that their kids belongings can be put away and they won't be in violation for excessive clutter.

Question: Tenant wanted to know if it was a HUD regulation.

Stephanie replied not a HUD regulations. It is in house. It was to help with the clutter problem. Needs to be plastic and not wood.

Tenant brought up that when she lived in Lanakila her unit was bigger and she did not need storage, but now she is in a new unit which is smaller and needs storage.

Meeting Adjourned